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Western Europe Review

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WESTERN EUROPE REVIEW

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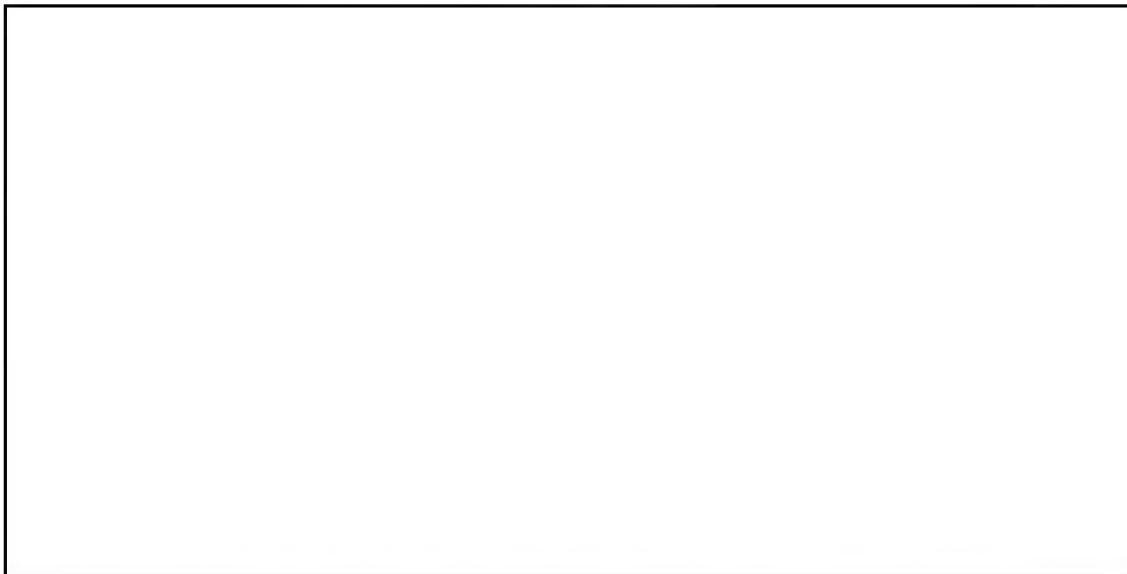
Socialist Party chief Craxi's demand that the Communists repudiate Leninism has embittered relations between the parties, highlighted the Socialists' internal party differences and will add to Prime Minister Andreotti's difficulties as he seeks compromises acceptable to the parties supporting his Christian Democratic government in parliament.

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Soviet Relations With Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus: Re-
trospect and Prospects

The pace of Soviet relations with Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus has picked up in recent years as cold war tensions have abated and the flareup of Greek-Turkish disputes has given all four countries more room for maneuver. From the Soviet perspective, the new situation has provided an opportunity to woo those states and further weaken NATO's southern flank. For the Greeks and even more for the Turks, the Soviet "card" is a way to increase their leverage with Western allies and secure political, security, and economic benefits from a rapprochement with one of the world's two superpowers. There are limits, however, to such maneuvering. Among these are mutual suspicions, the obstacles posed by membership in opposing alliances, Moscow's inability simultaneously to please both the Greeks and the Turks, and the basic commitment of both Greece and Turkey to remaining in the Western orbit.

The improvement in relations has gone further and faster between Moscow and Ankara. Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit's visit to Moscow last June resulted in significant new economic accords and the signing of a much publicized "political document." Greek Foreign Minister Rallis' Moscow visit in early September was much more subdued, but it represented a milestone in the normalization of Greece's historically cool relations with the Soviet Union and apparently paved the way for a followup visit by Prime Minister Karamanlis next year. Cypriot President Kyprianou is also slated to go to Moscow in 1979. In addition, both Greece and Turkey will exchange warship visits with the Soviet Union this fall, the first such occurrence since World War II.

Goals and Policies

The Soviets have been guided by a number of often conflicting considerations in formulating their policies toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus. These include preserving and enhancing their access routes to the

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Mediterranean through the Turkish straits; weakening NATO and also preventing its extension to Cyprus; helping the pro-Soviet Communist parties in Greece and Cyprus (the Turkish party is minuscule and illegal); and enhancing Moscow's image as protector of Third World states against "neocolonialism."

For the most part, Soviet policymakers have been more concerned with securing their southern access routes and weakening NATO than with helping client parties or defending nonaligned states. This has generally meant paying more attention to Turkey, with its strategic location and greater military potential. Although in the immediate post - World War II period the Soviets threatened Turkey and made territorial demands, Moscow gradually has come to rely on a softer approach emphasizing economic assistance. Turkey has become one of the main benefactors of such aid, having received more than \$1.5 billion in Soviet pledges. Clearly, the Soviets hope that their largesse will produce political payoffs such as easier access to points south and a loosening of Turkey's Western ties. The Ecevit government and many of its predecessors have been receptive to Moscow's blandishments in the belief they can exploit them without incurring any binding political costs and use them as leverage to secure more help from Turkey's allies.

The Soviets have never shown as much interest in Greece. There was no attempt to bully the Greeks after World War II; in a meeting with Churchill in 1944, Stalin accepted a division of influence in postwar Greece that gave the British "90 percent" influence to Moscow's "10 percent." Nor did Moscow give much encouragement at first to the Greek Communist insurrection--even though the Greek elite and much of the populace considered the Soviets responsible. Soviet indifference, combined with Greek anti-Sovietism, produced three decades of generally cool relations that only recently began to thaw as the Greeks sought to secure their flanks in the event of a military clash with Turkey. One measure of that coolness is that the Soviets have never proffered--nor have the Greeks requested--the kind of economic aid that has been flowing to Turkey for some time.

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Soviet relations with the government of Cyprus--i.e., with the Greek Cypriots--have generally been more cordial than those with Greece, but increasingly less so than those with Turkey. Past Soviet support for Cyprus was based on Moscow's awareness that an end to Nicosia's independence at the hands of either Greece or Turkey would extend the NATO umbrella to Cyprus. The Greek Cypriots have welcomed Soviet assistance, even in the face of Athens' wrath, since they thereby gain leverage against the West and preserve their nonaligned status. And unlike mainland Greek governments, which for three decades proscribed Communist parties, the government in Nicosia permits the Cypriot party to operate freely, even consulting it on major government decisions. Once Moscow began trying to exploit Turkey's disenchantment with the West over such issues as the US arms embargo, however, its support for the Greek Cypriots became more rhetorical and relations have cooled.

Turkish-Soviet Relations: The Primacy of Pragmatism

When the left-of-center Ecevit government was installed last January, Ecevit made clear that Turkish foreign policy would take on a "new look" regardless of what happened to Turkey's relations with its NATO allies. Part of that new look would entail an improvement and broadening of Turkey's relations with the Soviet Union. Ecevit called both for more extensive economic cooperation and for a regional detente whereby Turkey would no longer act solely as a bastion or outpost of the West in that part of the world. The Soviets quickly responded to Ecevit's signals: they doubled a \$650 million credit that had been offered in 1975, made a veiled offer of military assistance (which the Turks deflected), and invited Ecevit to the Soviet Union.

Ecevit's trip to Moscow resulted in a significant broadening of economic and political ties. The two countries concluded a long-term trade agreement in which they undertook to more than double the volume of their trade over the next three years; the Soviets also agreed, in principle at least, to provide Turkey with 3 million tons of oil annually in return for Turkish wheat and raw materials. The Soviets went out of their way to be accommodating on other issues. They agreed to an equal delimitation of the Black Sea continental shelf,

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and they also showed a willingness at least to examine the question of a greater Turkish role in control of Black Sea air traffic. Moreover, they appeared to minimize their differences with the Turks on the Cyprus issue.

In return, Ecevit signed a political document of "friendly and good neighborly relations" in which the two sides agreed to deepen their growing detente and to abjure the use of force or use of their territory for subversion or aggression. The document included the important caveat, however, that obligations arising out of their membership in different alliances would not be affected. Ecevit in fact fended off suggested Soviet language smacking of a nonaggression pact.

The Ecevit government's relations with Moscow are indicative of a pragmatism that has long been characteristic of Turkish-Soviet relations. As far back as the 1920s, the fledgling Soviet and Ataturk regimes found it in their interest to enter into a treaty of friendship that freed them to concentrate on other matters. Post - World War II Soviet territorial claims set back relations for two decades, and another low point was reached during the first Cyprus crisis in early 1964, when the Soviets under Khrushchev tilted firmly toward the Greek Cypriots and warned Ankara not to intervene.

The emergence of new leadership in Moscow later in 1964 and Turkey's growing disenchantment with its NATO allies--particularly over the so-called "Johnson letter" that June, which warned that NATO might not come to Turkey's assistance if Soviet intervention followed any Turkish invasion of Cyprus--combined to prompt both sides to seek a new modus vivendi. With minor exceptions, Turkish-Soviet relations have been improving ever since, with Moscow making most of the initiatives. These have included substantial economic assistance, a more even-handed Cyprus policy, and a tilt toward Turkey on the Aegean dispute.

The improvement has been highlighted by a series of exchanges at the foreign minister, prime minister, and presidential levels. Ecevit's trip to Moscow was the most dramatic and widely publicized of these, since it came amid speculation of a reorientation in Turkish foreign policy as a result of the arms embargo. Earlier there had been reciprocal visits by the foreign ministers

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in late 1964 and 1965 as well as a visit in 1965 by Turkish Prime Minister Urguplu, the first at this level since 1938. In the course of those consultations, the Soviets promised their first significant loan totaling \$200 million; they also for the first time acknowledged the existence of two "communities" on Cyprus as well as the feasibility of a federation. Visits by Premier Kosygin and Prime Minister Demirel followed in 1966 and 1967. While in Ankara, Kosygin offered additional economic assistance and made a clearer reference to the two Cypriot communities. Demirel, for his part, declared that his trip to Moscow had "eliminated" the last trace of hostility in Soviet-Turkish relations, although he took care to note that Turkey's ties with the US and NATO would not be affected.

The exchange of visits by Presidents Sunay and Podgorny in 1969 and 1972 resulted in additional Soviet loans of \$325 million and in the issuance during Podgorny's visit of a joint statement of principles, where for the first time the two sides pledged not to permit their territory to be used for subversion or aggression. That statement represented the first Soviet effort to collect major political dividends from its economic assistance.

Congressional imposition of the US arms embargo against Turkey in 1975 and Turkey's subsequent suspension of US base operations prompted Kosygin to visit Ankara later that year with promises of \$650 million in assistance and an "offer" to enter into a far-reaching treaty of friendship. The Demirel coalition government accepted the aid, but fended off a Soviet proposal that Demirel come to Moscow to sign such a treaty. Instead, Foreign Minister Caglayangil signed an agreement in Moscow in 1977 that merely restated the 1972 principles.

Viewed in this context, Ecevit's visit and his policies toward the Soviet Union do not necessarily herald a new departure in Turkish-Soviet relations. To be sure, the economic arrangements worked out in Moscow will represent a significant increase in economic ties if they are fully implemented, but they are not so extensive as to reorient Turkey's economy and make it dependent on the Soviet Union. And while Ecevit signed the political document that his more conservative predecessor had balked at, he made certain that it was no more than a restatement of the 1972 principles and the Helsinki Final Act.

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Still, Turkey's desperate need for economic help and the scope of Moscow's assistance have given the Soviets more potential leverage than they have had earlier on the political and security aspects of Turkey's foreign policy. Of perhaps greater importance may be Ecevit's seeming inclination to achieve a qualitative as well as quantitative improvement in Turkish-Soviet relations and his willingness to discuss political and security issues as well as economic topics. Whether this is anything more than empty verbiage--whether, for example, Ecevit will impose more stringent restrictions on US and NATO activities in Turkey--will become more clear when negotiations on the agreement governing the operation of US bases commence later this fall. The Soviets clearly are hoping for such restrictions and have said as much to the Turks.

Greek-Soviet Relations: Toward Normalization

With few exceptions, Greece's relations with Moscow have been heavily burdened by ideological enmity and diplomatic apathy. That Foreign Minister Rallis' trip to Moscow was the first of its kind since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1924 attests to this, especially when compared to the comings and goings between Ankara and Moscow. Although the positive atmosphere surrounding the Rallis visit approximated that accompanying Ecevit's, Rallis' trip was far shorter on substance, suggesting that Athens' relations with Moscow have a long way to go before they equal those of Ankara. The two sides signed cultural and consular agreements, but these were preceded by two years of drawn-out negotiations in which the Soviets drove a hard bargain on cultural exchanges and ethnic Greek emigration from the Soviet Union. Agreement was also reached to conduct followup discussions on the possibility of greater cooperation in such areas as energy and trade.

Acknowledging that "mistakes" had been made in the past, Soviet leaders stressed the need to bring political relations up to the level of commercial and economic ties. Kosygin also invited Karamanlis to visit Moscow. But there apparently was no discussion of signing a political document similar to that signed with Turkey, and the two sides avoided discussing most political subjects on which they disagreed, such as Balkan

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cooperation and Greek-NATO relations. Moreover, they simply agreed to disagree on Aegean issues. And while this time the Soviets appeared to endorse basically pro - Greek Cypriot UN resolutions on the Cyprus issue, the communique language was bland enough not to antagonize Turkey.

Overall, the Rallis visit was simply one more step in a slow process of normalization. The only previous thaw occurred in 1963 and 1964, when the centrist government of George Papandreou came to power and Moscow backed the Greek Cypriots against the Turks. The low point in Greek-Soviet relations since the civil war period was the seven years (1967-74) of military rule, which the junta justified as necessary to prevent a Communist takeover. Ideological antipathy, together with the junta's persecution of local Communists and its efforts to subvert the Makarios government in Cyprus, combined to produce severe strains between Moscow and Athens.

The restoration of democratic rule in 1974, Karamanlis' legalization of Greece's Communist parties, his withdrawal of Greece from the military side of NATO in reaction to Turkey's Cyprus intervention, and his intimations that he was interested in normalizing relations seemed to open the way for a rapid improvement of ties with USSR. Such has not been the case. The Soviets expressed some incredulity over whether the Greeks really had withdrawn from NATO, an impression reinforced by Karamanlis' repeated declarations of Greece's continued commitment to the West. Moscow also seemed to harbor some lingering suspicions about Karamanlis himself, who during his first stint as Prime Minister developed a reputation as a staunch anti-Communist who was very responsive to Western defense needs. Karamanlis and his colleagues in fact continued to express their dislike for Communism and for the Soviet Union, even as they gave Greek Communists free rein and sought to normalize relations with Moscow.

Procedural and substantive differences on law of the sea issues, in which Moscow's preference for bilateral talks over international adjudication and its opposition to restrictions on Aegean shipping and extension of territorial waters coincided more with Turkish views, also slowed a rapprochement. So too did Moscow's Cyprus policy, which the Greeks have interpreted as duplicitous

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and designed to please Ankara. Indeed, perhaps the main reason for the tepid state of Soviet-Greek relations is the belief shared by both sides that Turkey is more important to the Soviets.

Moscow's tilt toward Turkey has been underscored by such slights as Kosygin's avoidance of a meeting with Karamanlis at the Helsinki Conference in 1975 while he managed to meet with Demirel. In deference to the Turks, the Soviets also refused to participate in ceremonies last year commemorating the 150th anniversary of the decisive naval battle of the Greek War of Independence, when a combined British, French, and Russian armada defeated the Ottoman fleet. Such behavior, together with other instances of Soviet standoffishness and footdragging in the talks on the consular and cultural agreements, prompted Karamanlis to declare in both his 1976 and 1977 policy speeches that if Greek-Soviet relations had not reached a desirable level, the blame was not with the Greek side.

It was the Soviet response to this charge that finally culminated in the Rallis visit and the invitation to Karamanlis. But given the many suspicions and differences between them, not to mention Moscow's greater interest in Turkey, even an exchange of visits at the prime ministerial level may not suffice to improve Greek-Soviet ties significantly.

Cypriot-Soviet Relations: The Primacy of Rhetoric

The gradual decline in Soviet support for the Greek Cypriot cause is evidenced by the rather unenthusiastic invitation to President Kyprianou to visit Moscow "some-time next year," and the Soviets' success in fending off a Makarios visit for the three years before his death last year. To be sure, the Soviets along with their allies have extended considerable diplomatic support to the Greek Cypriots at the UN and other international forums. They have also sought occasionally to prod the Turks into showing more flexibility on a Cyprus settlement. And they have made clear that they favor an independent, nonaligned, and territorially integral state. But beyond their opposition to partition, the Soviets have shown little inclination to help the Greek Cypriots bring about a major reversal of the situation brought

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on by the Turkish invasion. They have lately refused, for example, to provide military assistance as they did in 1964 when the Greek Cypriots faced a Turkish threat, or as their Czechoslovak proxy did in 1972 in the face of anti-Makarios machinations by the Greek junta. Nor have they been willing to bring heavy pressure to bear on Ankara.

Moscow's principal initiative since the 1974 Turkish intervention has been its repeated call for an international conference on Cyprus, attended by the permanent members of the UN Security Council and certain other states. The idea was approved in principle by the Greek Cypriots but opposed by Ankara and Athens, which traditionally have sought to keep the Soviets out of the Cyprus problem. Moscow, however, has never really pressed the idea. Overall, Greek Cypriots have become cynical about Soviet willingness to help their cause. Nonetheless, they continue to welcome whatever support Moscow is willing to extend.

Prospects

Of Moscow's relations with the three countries, those with Turkey clearly carry the greatest potential for further improvement. The staggering needs of the Turkish economy make it likely that Moscow will continue to look to economic assistance as the best way to draw Turkey away from NATO and secure other political benefits. The Turks are apt to remain receptive to Moscow's blandishments, both for leverage with the West and as a supplementary source of much-needed economic assistance. Ecevit's apparent predilection for making his own "contribution to detente" may be an additional factor leading to an improvement of ties.

There are other factors, however, that will limit the extent of Soviet-Turkish rapprochement. On the Soviet side, there are bounds beyond which Moscow would be unable or unwilling to provide Turkey with the hard currency and credits its economy needs, particularly since there is unlikely to be any assurance that such largesse would have significant political payoffs. The Turks, on the other hand, will remain reluctant to make too much of the Soviet connection: Ankara's aim is to prod its Western allies to provide more help, not to alienate them. Within Turkey, the military and most other members of

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the Turkish elite remain pro-Western and distrustful of the Soviet Union. Ecevit himself, moreover, is essentially a pro-Western nationalist, albeit a left-of-center one, who does not want to exchange one dependence for another.

Soviet-Greek relations are not likely to advance very far even if Karamanlis does journey to Moscow. The prospering Greek economy and Greece's excellent international credit rating do not give the Soviets room to use economic assistance for political leverage. Soviet interests in the Aegean dispute coincide more with those of Turkey, and Moscow is unwilling to press the Turks too hard on Cyprus. The pro-Soviet Greek Communist Party gives Moscow some potential influence, which it could use either to create trouble for Karamanlis or to support him. Thus far, the Soviets have counseled the party to follow policies in between those extremes and have thus tended to squander that leverage. Moscow also has some leverage in the fact that its Bulgarian ally borders northern Greece, a situation that could be used to help or hinder the Greeks in the event of a clash with Turkey. Both the Soviets and the Bulgarians, however, have given the Greeks assurances that their northern border is secure.

The Greeks' concern about safeguarding their flanks has probably been the single most important reason behind Karamanlis' effort to normalize relations with Moscow. Recognizing that their smaller size gives them fewer options than Turkey, however, the Greeks are likely to continue to refrain from using the Soviet card to prod their allies and will continue to concentrate instead on maneuvering within the Western orbit. Perhaps of most importance, Karamanlis and his colleagues, in contrast to the Younger Ecevit and his entourage, matured during the cold war and harbor a deep distrust and dislike for the Soviet Union. This is even more true of the Greek military, whose civil war campaign is an important part of its institutional memory. Thus, while Greek-Soviet relations will continue to improve, the process will be slow and is not apt to amount to more than normalization of diplomatic ties and a modest increase in economic cooperation.

In Cyprus, Moscow will probably keep straddling the issue by providing the Greek Cypriots with diplomatic

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support while otherwise acquiescing in the current situation on the island. In this way, the Soviets hope to mollify the Greek Cypriots and also help the local Communist Party while not unduly ruffling the Turks. And while the Soviets may continue to peddle their call for an international conference, they are not apt to inject themselves more deeply into the issue so long as the island's territorial integrity and nonaligned status are not threatened.

The Greek Cypriots would be more than willing to cater to Soviet interests if the Soviets would exert more pressure on Turkey, but they recognize that Cyprus is far less important than Turkey in Soviet eyes. Nor do they see any way to increase their leverage with Moscow. Indeed, the Greek Cypriots' maneuvering room is also limited by Athens' insistence that they keep their distance from Moscow, as well as by their own desire not to alienate the West, which they still see as being in the best position to effect a Cyprus settlement because of its influence with Turkey. Significant movement in the Soviet-Cyprus relationship is thus quite unlikely.

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Italy: The Socialist-Communist Polemic--The Practical
Consequences of Craxi's Political Brinksmanship

The Debate

As the pace of political activity increases following the traditional August vacation, a sharp ideological debate between the Socialists and Communists dominates the Italian scene. The debate revolves around Socialist Party chief Bettino Craxi's allegation that the Communist Party cannot be considered democratic until it repudiates Leninism. This dispute has embittered relations between the two parties, highlighted the Socialists' internal party differences, and will add to Prime Minister Andreotti's difficulties as he seeks compromises acceptable to the five parties--including the Communists and Socialists--that support his Christian Democratic government in parliament.



Socialist leader Bettino Craxi

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Craxi raised the issue as the latest and most ambitious effort in his campaign to promote Socialist autonomy and distinguish the PSI from the Communists and Christian Democrats. Craxi believes the PSI's low electoral standing--9.6 percent compared to the Christian Democrats' 38.7 percent and the Communists' 34.4 percent--reflects mainly the Socialist Party's failure to project itself as an effective alternative to either of the larger parties.

Craxi triggered the debate late last month with a magazine article entitled "The Socialist Gospel." It was a response to an earlier interview given by Communist Party Secretary Enrico Berlinguer, in which he had defended his party against critics who demand it repudiate Lenin as proof of the Communists' integration into the West European political system.

Berlinguer argued that the Communists do not interpret Lenin's contributions as static or doctrinaire and that they intend to revise their views on the subject at the next party congress. In the meantime, Berlinguer said, many of Lenin's contributions to the elaboration of revolutionary theory remain valid. Some Communists assert that Berlinguer's comments were intended primarily to dampen rank-and-file dissent over his moderate policies and support for the government.

In any event, Craxi seized the issue as an opportunity to draw some major ideological distinctions between his party and the Communists. The Socialist Party leader directed his attacks against the Communists' attachment to "Leninism," identifying the concept exclusively with authoritarianism and collectivism and arguing that it inevitably subordinates the working class to the intellectual elite of the Communist Party. On the other hand, Craxi associated his party with a liberal, pluralistic political tradition more receptive to the diffusion of economic, social, and political power. Craxi concluded that so long as such a dichotomy exists, there is no possibility of a "united Left" to counterbalance the political power of the Christian Democrats.

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The Response

Communists have responded initially with an ideological defense and a practical warning against the focus of Craxi's challenge. Communist spokesmen have unanimously accused the PSI leader of interpreting socialist history in a simplistic and inaccurate way while denying the two parties' common ideological and political heritage. Echoing Berlinguer's arguments, Secretariat members Gianni Cervetti and Giancarlo Pajetta defended Lenin's thought for its theoretical and historical value, while denying that the Italian Communist Party approaches the issue dogmatically.

Communist Secretariat member Giorgio Napolitano took Craxi to task on practical rather than theoretical grounds. He advised the Socialists to drop their ideological attacks on the Communists, because the public will judge each party primarily on its contributions to the resolution of Italy's problems. Napolitano reminded Craxi that a degree of cooperation between the two major parties of the Left will be necessary to overcome Christian Democratic opposition on a number of programmatic issues. In this way, the Socialists can assert their autonomy within the current governing arrangement by linking any ideological debate to the solution of Italy's problems.

Craxi's thesis has also stimulated a lively debate among the PSI's various factions. Although Socialists generally consider the debate a useful way to distinguish themselves from the Communists, they still want to avoid a complete break with the largest party of the Left.

Secretariat member Fabrizio Cichitto has defended the Socialist leader's tactics and contends that the initiative is not aimed at a break but a "rebalancing of forces" between the Socialists and Communists. Claudio Signorile, vice secretary of the party and Craxi's key ally, adds that Craxi's ultimate objective is participation in a Leftist alliance that might eventually govern Italy and cooperate more closely with other West European socialist parties. These Socialists insist, however, that such an alliance is impossible unless the Communists break definitively with Moscow and renounce Leninist practices such as democratic centralism.

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On the other hand, Michele Achilli, leader of the tiny, "new Left" faction in the PSI, has led an attack on Craxi and attempted to sound the battle cry for old party warhorses such as Riccardo Lombardi, Giacomo Mancini, and Francesco De Martino.* Achilli has called for a Central Committee debate of Craxi's initiative, charging that he is transforming the character of the party and making it virtually identical to the Social Democratic Party--whose distinguishing characteristic has always been its anti-Communism.

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The Christian Democrats have reacted ambivalently to Craxi's initiative. While welcoming the opportunity to snipe at the Communists, many Christian Democrats fear that the polemic will complicate and eventually undermine the current governing arrangement--with no workable alternative in sight. Christian Democratic Secretary General Benigno Zaccagnini and party president Flaminio Piccoli agree, for example, that the Socialist-Communist debate is a useful means of focusing attention on the ambiguities and contradictions in the Communists' position. Consequently, these Christian Democratic leaders urge the Communists to be more explicit, especially concerning relations with the Soviet Union and on the issue of democratic centralism.

Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, on the other hand, is more concerned with the possible effects of Craxi's

*Lombardi and Mancini have responded in a lower key, acknowledging that Craxi's approach is simplistic but helpful in clarifying intellectual issues within the Italian Left, creating a new, more equitable relationship with the Communists, and adding ultimately to the parties' joint efforts at overcoming Christian Democratic hegemony in government.

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polemic on the future of his government. Andreotti has advised Craxi to limit his attacks on the Communists, arguing that a split in the Italian Left would slow the Communists' evolution toward democracy and independence. This evolution, in Andreotti's view, might lead eventually to the possibility of a Leftist alternative government--a prospect the Christian Democrats should view as enhancing political stability in Italy. In any event, the Prime Minister asserts Communist cooperation is necessary now for the adoption of specific programs aimed at solving the country's economic and social problems.

Many Christian Democrats have also begun to worry that Craxi's efforts are designed to draw support from the Christian Democratic left. In response, party leaders are playing down their conservative heritage and emphasizing recent developments that highlight the party's progressive side--the revival of the Christian Democratic youth movement, the direct election of the Secretary General, and the increased number of younger members in the party's parliamentary delegation.

Practical Consequences

With the recent opening of parliament, concrete political issues will probably soon take precedence over the ideological debate. To maintain the momentum and credibility he may have established by proclaiming the "Socialist gospel," Craxi will be under pressure to shift his attacks on the Communists from the theoretical to the practical. This could encourage the Socialists to assume positions in opposition to the Communists on a number of sensitive issues and especially on the government's economic plan. Such a stance would compound the government's problems and increase the possibility of a classic Italian stalemate on a variety of issues.

The chief constraint on Craxi will be the desire of all three major parties to keep the current government in place for the foreseeable future. There is no consensus on an alternative formula, and none of the parties feels prepared for the elections that might follow a governmental collapse. The Communists want more time to prove their own maturity and moderation as part of the governmental majority and to convince party supporters that cooperation is paying off in concrete terms.

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The Christian Democrats are not yet convinced of Craxi's reliability as an ally, despite his apparent desire to eventually revive the Christian Democratic - Socialist alliance. For their part, the Socialists want more time to establish a credible image and resolve internal party differences. They are also reluctant to move toward a new center-left coalition if it would mean binding them to governmental responsibility while leaving the Communists free to criticize from the opposition benches.

These factors highlight the difficulty of Craxi's position. Despite the parties' common interest in the prolongation of a relatively stable government, the logic of the Socialist leader's strategy implies at least periodic confrontations with the Communists and Christian Democrats over programs. In these circumstances, Craxi will have to be a master of political brinksmanship if he intends to persist in his autonomist course and yet avoid missteps leading to a premature governmental collapse--the "crisis in the dark" that all Italian politicians seek to avoid.

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Western Europe - Angola: Improving Relations

In recent months, several West European countries have received overtures from the Angolan Government for diplomatic links and economic cooperation. Many West European officials welcome these moves because they hope that Western economic support and technical expertise will eventually displace Soviet political influence and the Cuban role in Angola. But the West Europeans have been frustrated so far by Luanda's desultory approach to normalizing relations. They remain uncertain about the Angolan Government's intentions toward the West and skeptical of its ability, even with Cuban help, to gain control of the country's economy or withstand political and military challenges from rebel groups.

Portugal

Portugal's ties with its former colony are in many ways the most intense and complex. While many Portuguese who fled Angola after 1974 remain hostile to the revolutions both there and in Portugal, President Eanes hopes that a reconciliation with Angola will serve Portugal's commercial interests and enhance its status in Western circles as a "bridge" to southern Africa.

At the same time, the Portuguese are concerned to align their Angola policy with that of other Western countries, especially the US. They have been eager to learn whether the US views a Cuban withdrawal or a reconciliation between President Neto and the UNITA rebels as conditions for establishing formal relations with Luanda. On these points several Portuguese officials argue that Neto wants to pursue genuine nonalignment, but is restrained by the Soviets and Cubans on whom he depends for internal security. Similarly, they say, East Germans control the Angolan media, whose attacks on UNITA block any reconciliation between Neto and the rebel group.

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About 30,000 Portuguese remain in Angola, but this number may increase as some of the refugees now in Portugal return to Africa. In addition, some Portuguese technicians are on temporary tours of duty in Angola. Eanes intends that this sort of cooperation, as well as trade, should grow.

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Belgium and France

Belgian and French policies toward Angola reflect two distinct approaches to southern African problems. Belgium--with important interests in diamond and copper mines in Angola and neighboring Zaire as well as in the Benguela railroad--has sought a reconciliation between Angola and Zaire that would dampen the activities of rebels that each shelters against the other. Similarly, to facilitate their economic enterprises, the Belgians have favored a resolution of the Shaba conflict in Zaire that would ensure efficient administration of the region's economy, regardless of who holds control politically.

These policies have made Belgian officials welcome in Luanda. This month Belgian Foreign Minister Simonet visited Angola for extensive talks on economic cooperation--especially in Angolan mining and oil development, enlarging the port of Lobito, technical training, and irrigation projects. Simonet also encouraged Angola to build closer relations with the European Community through participation in the Lome Convention.

In contrast, French officials have stressed the Soviet and Cuban threat to Western interests in Africa, and they have defended Mobutu against what they perceive as Cuban-supported attacks from Katanga rebels based in Angola. The French have viewed the Neto government in Luanda as allied to the Soviet and Cuban effort and have reportedly supported Angolan rebel groups like UNITA.

Thus, France has been kept at arm's length by the Neto government. Angolan officials have characterized France as in league with imperialist and racist forces in Africa, especially in the wake of French support for Mobutu against the Shaba rebellion. The French maintain

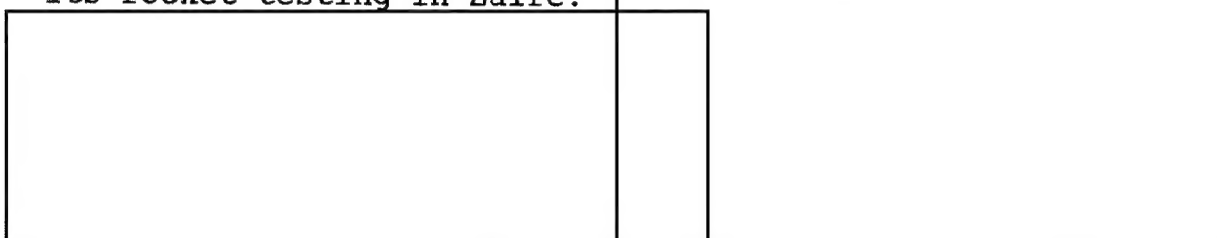
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a strong interest in Angola's oil, but they fear that Neto may prove fundamentally hostile to the West and may threaten Mobutu's regime in Zaire.

Other Western Links

In other moves toward normalization of West European relations with Angola, Swedish and Dutch officials held talks with the Angolans this spring, and Madrid has concluded a fishing agreement with Luanda. Among the European Community countries, only West Germany has no formal links with Angola. Angolan officials have argued that relations between the two are blocked because of African concern about the West German company Otrag and its rocket testing in Zaire.



Among other West Europeans, the Italians have been especially successful in trade negotiations with Luanda. British officials note Angolan interest in commercial ties with the UK as well, but have only recently named an ambassador to Luanda, partly because they expected delays like those met by the French.

EC Relations

In the West European view, Angola's prospective ties to the European Community through the Lome Convention will be especially effective in drawing the Africans away from Soviet influence. In June, at the same time that Neto requested that a US official come to Angola for talks, he asked that EC Commissioner for Aid and Development Claude Cheysson come to discuss Angolan accession to the Convention. Cheysson believes Angola wants a definite tie to the EC, partly because the EC does not put political conditions on aid. At present, the Lome Convention is being renegotiated in Brussels, and Angola intends to send an observer to those talks.

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Outlook

For both political and economic reasons, West European governments will continue to seek closer relations with Angola, especially as regards trade and investment in that country's rich mineral resources. But the Europeans will meet both political and administrative delays on Angola's side, partly because of Luanda's dependence on the Soviets and Cubans and partly because of the economic and political disorder likely to plague Angola for some time.

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